



NORTHEAST IDAHO

BONNEVILLE, BUTTE, CLARK, CUSTER, FREMONT, JEFFERSON, LEMHI, MADISON, & TETON COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

August's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the Bonneville Labor Market Area (LMA) decreased three-tenths of a percentage point over the month to 3.5 percent as seen in Northeast Table 1. That rate is the same as in August 2002. The LMA's rate is 2.2 percentage points lower than the state's rate of 5.7 percent and 2.6 percentage points lower than the national rate of 6.1 percent. The unemployment rate for all four counties in the LMA decreased over the month as construction remained strong, preparation for harvest began, and the labor force decreased by over 2,300 people; the number of unemployed people decreased by over 300. Year-over-year, the labor force decreased by over 2,100 while unemployment decreased by only 40. Idaho Falls, the largest city in the LMA, showed a decrease in the unemployment rate of one-tenth of a percentage point over the month and two-tenths of a percentage point over the year.

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs in the LMA decreased 1,080 jobs from July. *Government Education* saw a decrease of 800 jobs while summer terms ended with breaks until the beginning of the fall term. *Wholesale Trade* lost 140 jobs while some fresh-pack and processing plants reduced their workforces to skeleton crews for maintenance during the slow season before new crops arrive. Even *Manufacturing* decreased by more than 100 jobs due to a large decrease in its *Food Manufacturing* sector, stemming from the same reason for the dip in *Wholesale Trade*. There were gains over the month, such as 200 jobs in *Construction* with days staying clear and sunny for optimal building. *Leisure & Hospitality* increased by 40 jobs and *Other Services* added 60 jobs.

Year-over-year, *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by only 100, though individual industries saw some larger changes.

Northeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Bonneville, Bingham, Butte, and Jefferson Counties

	Aug 2003*	July 2003	Aug 2002	% Change From Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	80,470	82,820	82,660	-2.8	-2.6
Unemployment	2,840	3,190	2,880	-11.0	-1.4
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.5%	3.8%	3.5%		
Total Employment	77,630	79,640	79,780	-2.5	-2.7
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	83,010	84,580	83,750	-1.9	-0.9
Unemployment	3,560	2,750	3,680	29.5	-3.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.3%	3.3%	4.4%		
Total Employment	79,450	81,830	80,070	-2.9	-0.8
JOB BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	63,710	64,790	63,610	-1.7	0.2
Goods-Producing Industries	11,360	11,270	10,390	0.8	9.3
Natural Resources & Mining	70	70	80	0.0	-12.5
Construction	5,970	5,770	5,200	3.5	14.8
Manufacturing	5,320	5,430	5,110	-2.0	4.1
Food Manufacturing	2,410	2,560	2,700	-5.9	-10.7
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	320	300	280	6.7	14.3
Machinery Manufacturing	490	500	430	-2.0	14.0
Other Manufacturing	2,100	2,070	1,700	1.4	23.5
Service-Providing Industries	52,350	53,520	53,220	-2.2	-1.6
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	14,180	14,370	14,410	-1.3	-1.6
Wholesale Trade	4,700	4,840	4,700	-2.9	0.0
Retail Trade	7,540	7,580	7,890	-0.5	-4.4
Utilities	110	110	110	0.0	0.0
Transportation	1,830	1,840	1,710	-0.5	7.0
Information	770	820	910	-6.1	-15.4
Financial Activities	2,040	2,050	2,100	-0.5	-2.9
Professional & Business Services	11,790	11,900	11,860	-0.9	-0.6
Educational & Health Services	6,430	6,460	6,100	-0.5	5.4
Leisure & Hospitality	5,340	5,300	5,310	0.8	0.6
Other Services	2,310	2,250	2,450	2.7	-5.7
Government Education	3,260	4,060	3,970	-19.7	-17.9
Government Administration	6,230	6,310	6,110	-1.3	2.0

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

Construction was up 770 jobs from August 2002, with large commercial projects such as Taylor Crossing on the River, a commercial strip center, and the Grupo Modelo malt processing plant still in the works. Residential construction is still very strong in all counties except Butte. *Manufacturing* gained 210 jobs in spite of a decrease of 290 jobs since August 2002 in its *Food Manufacturing* sector. *Educational & Health Services* increased by 330 jobs (mostly *Health Services*) while *Transportation* and *Government Administration* each increased by 120 jobs. Larger losses were noted in *Government Education* (-710 jobs) from budget cuts and population changes, *Retail Trade* (-350 jobs) and *Information* (-140 jobs) stemming from the national economy's lower level of consumer confidence.

SPECIAL TOPIC:

Building Eastern Idaho

A review of the past year shows that construction totals have been hitting record levels for quite some time. Logically, by looking at other numbers such as the steady increases in *Civilian Labor Force* and population, it can be seen that growth is steadily plodding along in the LMA, regardless of national woes. In the *Idaho Construction Report* published by Wells Fargo Bank, total construction value was up almost \$5 million in June 2003 compared to June 2002 for Eastern Idaho, which encompasses Bingham, Bonneville, Madison, Jefferson, Fremont, and Lemhi Counties. A six-month cumulative report shows that total construction value increased \$13 million compared to the first half of 2002. Most of the growth was noted in new residential dwelling units for a total value of \$75,196,710. Rexburg shows the largest growth in new dwelling units, up to 353 units for the first six months of 2003 compared to 126 in the same time period in 2002. As BYU-Idaho steadily grows with record-breaking enrollments, it is no surprise. While 28 of the increased number of units are single dwelling units, 199 are multi-family dwellings—mostly for married student housing. Idaho Falls dropped by 60 units (all in multi-family units) over the six-month time frame, while Ammon increased by 40 units, mostly in single-family units. The extremely mild winter that Idaho experienced made it possible to work year-round in nearly every phase of construction.

AREA DEVELOPMENTS

Bonneville County

- Kenny Rogers Roasters closed its doors at Seventeenth Street in Idaho Falls at the end of August after holding on longer than most of the other Roasters throughout the nation. Financial troubles plagued the chain since Roasters opened in Idaho Falls, but due to the support of the community, the Idaho Falls location was able to stay open until now. The Seventeenth Street restaurant space is currently up for lease.
- Lettuce Eat opened its second Idaho Falls restaurant downtown in the Bonneville Hotel on Park Avenue and Constitution Way. The restaurant is unique for featuring a 60-plus item salad bar. It also features a hot bar with a selection of soups, chicken wings, and baked potatoes, along with an offering of breads and desserts. The downtown location is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:35 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- Sonic Drive-In is set to open in mid-November at the corner of Pancheri Drive (across from Seven-

teenth Street) and South Yellowstone in Idaho Falls. This will be the second location in the area; the first restaurant is in Ammon on Seventeenth Street. The fast food establishment will feature its Accent on Education by providing incentives for elementary-age children. Along with other promotions, the "Wacky-Pak" kids' meal will feature educational CD-ROMs that focus on science, language, and geography.

- Wal-Mart announced plans to open another superstore in the area between Utah Avenue and Broadway (off Houston Street) in Idaho Falls. Though it just built a superstore in Ammon, near Idaho Falls, the company feels confident the community can support another store due to the large retail area it serves. The new superstore will be 200,000-square feet and will include three restaurant pads. Wal-Mart officials anticipate opening the new superstore in the spring of 2005.

Custer County

- The Challis Assisted Living Facility had an open house the first part of October with tours and an official dedication. The company functions under its corporate charter, Custer Health Care Association, and is a non-profit entity. Work on the facility started four years ago.

Lemhi County

- East Idaho Credit Union broke ground on a new branch at 777 North Lillian Street in Salmon, across the street from its existing branch. The 3,700-square-foot facility is scheduled for completion in May 2004, and will include a drive-up window and ATM machine. The existing operation will vacate the current location and move into the new building at that time. The Credit Union has been in Salmon for 22 years.

Teton County

- Hernandez Mexican Restaurant reopened in early September after closing seven months ago when a fire destroyed several businesses in the shopping strip where they were located. The new location at 355 North Main Street in Driggs is smaller than the original restaurant, but offers an open deck in the summer. The menu was expanded to include American-style breakfasts.

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